



(U) Dear Virtual Mentor: Should I Take Training?

FROM: the Virtual Mentor
Unknown
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(U) A few months ago, SIDtoday asked readers to tell us what monthly columns they would like to see. (See the [call for input](#).) We received requests for a "mentor" column, dispensing words of advice for those seeking guidance...

(U) Q: Dear Virtual Mentor, What do you think about training? Is it worth taking time away from work to attend classes? -- signed, Glued to My Desk

(U) A: Dear GTMD, Your dedication to your job is commendable and I'm glad to see all those hard-earned tax dollars going towards your salary are well spent. However... well, as one of those late 1970's rock bands (I'm dating myself) asked so succinctly, "Are you moving backwards, or are you moving forward?"

(U) What I mean is this: If you aren't keeping your skills current and you don't learn about the new things coming down the pike, you aren't just standing still -- you are moving backwards! (I think it has to do with the rotation of the Earth...) This is not to mention the obvious fact that as your career progresses, you are expected to become more and more knowledgeable and expand your horizons further and further.

(U) Granted, there are crunch times when it's just not feasible to stop cranking out intelligence (or whatever you do) to take a class or a self-paced course. And you certainly don't want to become a "professional student." But I recommend you periodically try to take time to enhance your job-related skills. It'll be good for you, good for your organization, and good for NSA.

*(U) Do you have a question of a general nature for the Virtual Mentor? Send it in, using the feedback ("comments/suggestions") function below!
Also, NSA has various programs in place for those who'd like a personal mentor. See the [mentoring network](#) webpage for info and links.*

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